

Creative JOB SEARCH

RESUME FORMAT COMPARISON CHART					
Format	Characteristic	Advantage	Disadvantage	Use	Don't Use If
Chronological	Presents information in reverse order, most recent experience listed first Offers concise picture of you as a potential employee	Easy to write Emphasizes steady employment record Format is familiar	Calls attention to employment gaps Skills are difficult to spot unless they're listed in the most recent job	To emphasize past career growth and development When continuing in the same career When the name of former employer may be significant to prospective employer	There are gaps in your work history Calling attention to your age could be a problem You've changed jobs often You're entering job market for first time or after a long absence
Functional	Focuses on specific strengths and skills important to employers	Focus on skills, not history De-emphasizes a spotty work history	No detailed work history Content may appear to lack depth May create suspicion you are hiding something	When entering the job market or when reentering after a long absence When work experience has been varied or unrelated When changing careers When primarily consulting or doing freelance work	You want to emphasize growth or development Responsibilities and functions in recent jobs were limited
Combination	All the flexibility and strength of the functional and chronological combined	Shows off a strong employment record with upward mobility Showcases relevant skills and abilities and supportive employment record Emphasizes transferable skills	Work history is often on the second page and employer may not read that far	When shorter functional format would be too sketchy to offer a complete picture of abilities and work history	Experience is limited There are wide gaps in work history
Format Variations					
Keyword	Allows for focused resumes that target skills	Skills are listed briefly and at the beginning of the resume Easy for employer to scan and find skills	May be redundant information to include keywords at the top of your resume Still an unfamiliar format to many employers	For all scannable systems of job screening For new graduates or those reentering the work place or changing careers	There is rarely a time you cannot use this variation. It can be used in combination with any or all of the other formats
Targeted	Highly focused document aimed at a particular job A "capsule" of work experience	Brief and direct Easy to read	May focus too tightly on one particular job Content may appear sparse	When job target is specific When you need separate resumes for different career paths	You aren't prepared to put the effort into writing an excellent resume